

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 EB-07 FEA-01 /024 W

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R 190105Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO ERDA GERMANTOWN

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 8747

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TECH, JA

SUBJECT: ERDA HELIUM STUDY

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2. TOKYO 2549

3. TOKYO 2579

4. TAIPEI 1305

5. SEOUL 1506

6. MANILA 2641

7. BANGKOK 3509

FOR DR. A.S. FRIEDMAN

1. AVAILABLE INFO IN HELIUM USAGE (REF. 1) IN COUNTRIES OTHER THAN JAPAN UNDER TOKYO ERDA COGNIZANCE FORWARDED TO SUPPLEMENT INFO IN REF. 2.

2. REPUBLIC OF CHINA

A. ROC IS NOT AT PRESENT A MAJOR USER OF HELIUM. IN FIRST ELEVEN MONTHS OF 1974 IMPORTS WERE ONLY 21,888 KILOGRAMS OR 547 CYLINDERS. SINCE EACH 40 KILOGRAM CYLINDER CONTAINS ONLY 15 KILOMGRAMS OF HELIUM, NET IMPORTS WERE ONLY 8,208 KILOGRAMS.

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B. PRINCIPAL USES FOR HELIUM ARE IN SOLDERING PRECIOUS METALS, IN HYDROMETERS, IN UNIVERSITY RESEARCH LABORATORIES,

IN TESTING GAS CYLINDERS FOR LEAKS AND IN IMPROVING VOICE COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN DIVERS AND OIL-DRILLING RIGS. NO USE AS YET IN HELIARC WELDING OR OTHER INDUSTRIAL APPLICATIONS BECAUSE OF COST.

C. ONE MAJOR ON-SHORE GAS FIELD HAS BEEN FOUND IN ROC NEAR MIAOLI BUT ONLY TRACES OF HELIUM ARE PRESENT. GAS FIELD ALSO HAS BEEN DISCOVERED OFF-SHORE WEST OF KAOHSIUNG AND TESTS ARE CONTINUING TO DETERMINE SIZE OF FIELD. TESTS INDICATE LITTLE HELIUM IS PRESENT. IT IS LIKELY, THEREFORE, THAT ROC WILL CONTINUE TO RELY ON IMPORTS. OFFICIALS IN NATIONAL SCIENCE COUNCIL AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BUREAU OF MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS PREDICT THAT ANNUAL CONSUMPTION OF HELIUM IN ROC IS NOT LIKELY TO INCREASE IN FORESEEABLE FUTURE BECAUSE OF PRICE AND COMPLETE DEPENDENCE ON IMPORTS.

3. REPUBLIC OF KOREA

A. REP. KOREA IS NOT LARGE USER OF HELIUM. TOTAL IMPORTS HAVE AVERAGED DOLS. 115,000 FOR PAST TWO YEARS.

B. HELIUM IS NOT SOLD ON THE MARKET BUT IMPORTED BY END USERS FOR METALLURGICAL APPLICATION, NEON SIGNS, .V. BALLOONS, NUC AND LAB RESEARCH BY COMMERCIAL TRADERS. PRICE VARIES FROM DOLS. 2 TO DOLS. 11 PER KG (LIQUIFIED) DEPENDING UPON THE GRADE, I.E., HIGH PURITY, ULTRA HIGH PURITY, RESEARCH, ZERO GAS, ETC.

C. NO THOUGHT TO SOURCE BEYOND YEAR 2000. BULK OF PRESENT IMPORTS HAVE SOURCE FROM U.S. WITH MINOR QUANTITIES FROM UK, BELGIUM AND WEST GERMANY.

4. PHILIPPINE ANNUAL CONSUMPTION OF HELIUM GAS IS INSIGNIFICANT AT 3,000 CUBIC FEET AND THERE IS NO INDICATION OF SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE IN FUTURE.

5. THAILAND DOES NOT NOW USE HELIUM AND HAS NO PLANS FOR USE IN THE FUTURE.

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